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Game-changing Research Initiative Program

Solutions to the global grand challenges facing our people, society, and the planet can best be found by the creation and deployment of successful transdisciplinary teams. The Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) is partnering with the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, the KSU Foundation, and the college deans to help form and support impactful research teams that can provide solutions to our Kansas stakeholders, our nation, and our world. Under this new initiative, we anticipate funding the most promising interdisciplinary teams to conduct transformative research that may also have a positive impact on Kansas economic growth and prosperity, in pursuit of the goals articulated in K-State's Economic Prosperity Plan.

This opportunity is open to *all* K-State faculty, departments, colleges, and campuses. A total of \$3M will be made available for this initiative. Proposals from transdisciplinary research teams are invited for up to \$300K per year for up to three years. An additional \$50K of ramp-up funding will be provided prior to the official start of the first year (\$950K total per project). We anticipate funding up to three teams/projects. The remaining \$150K will be used to seed promising but not yet competitive projects.

A core expectation of this program is to identify and support teams committed to developing competitive center-level proposals (federally funded, industry supported, or a combination of both) and/or contributing directly to statewide economic development.

K-State Salina receives largest corporate gift in university history from General Atomics

Kansas State University Salina Aerospace and Technology Campus is launching a revitalization plan for its aerospace teaching and research facilities thanks to the support of California-based company General Atomics Aeronautical Systems. The company's \$10 million dollar gift marks the largest corporate gift to an academic program in Kansas State University's history.

With the General Atomics gift, K-State Salina will create the General Atomics Aerospace Innovation Ramp, a first in the campus's aerospace history. The innovation ramp will encompass the southernmost portion of the K-State Salina campus and transform its footprint, revitalizing land that was home to the former Schilling Air Force Base. It will also enhance the campus's learning environment to meet the needs of the ever-changing aerospace industry, eventually making the campus one of the premier learning spaces in the country for aerospace education.

The innovation ramp will include the area west of Scanlan Avenue and north of Beechcraft Road. K-State Salina's campus master plan calls for this space to eventually also be home to the Kansas Advanced Simulation Center, the K-State Salina Advanced Air Mobility Center of Excellence, Aviation Maintenance Training Center, Advanced Composites Lab and a state-of-the-art engineering teaching facility and model factory.

U.S. Sen. Jerry Moran, Kansas, was one of the many public representatives who played an integral role in the new education space.

"K-State Salina is a leader in educating pilots, and this partnership with General Atomics will help the Aerospace and Technology Campus expand and grow its operations," Moran said. "General Atomics' investment in K-State is a testament to the university's education program and an investment in the future of American aviation."

General Atomics has been a trusted partner of K-State Salina in recent years. Since 2017, the two have collaborated on projects focused on advancing the aerospace industry. General Atomics Aeronautical Systems CEO Linden Blue is excited about what the General Atomics Aerospace Ramp at the K-State Salina campus will provide to the current challenges facing the industry.

"We have been working with K-State Salina for several years and recognize that now is the time to invest in the Aerospace and Technology campus," Blue said. "Their campus has a laser-focused vision to be a leader in aerospace and technology, and we are ready to support them in this vision. As General Atomics looks to the future of the aerospace industry, we are proud to have K-State Salina as our educational partner."

K-State Salina is focused on meeting the entire spectrum of career entry points and workforce needs of a niche industry. For the last three years, the campus has been conversing with industry partners to determine future workforce needs and working to adjust programmatic offerings for the aerospace needs of the future. The new campus master plan and planned developments will anchor the teaching and research activities of the new aerospace programs in the years to come.

"The General Atomics Innovation Ramp will set the Aerospace and Technology Campus apart from many other aerospace-focused institutions through the research and education it will provide," said K-State President Richard Linton. "The new ramp will foster K-State Salina's 2030 strategic initiatives and commitment to the residents of Kansas and this region. Not only will this space elevate how our Aerospace and Technology Campus trains future leaders, but it also is a testament to K-State's mission to elevate the quality of education at this campus and the university as a whole."



K-State Diagnostic Laboratory participating in surveillance for highly contagious avian influenza in Kansas

A Kansas State University lab is part of a federal effort to monitor for cases of highly pathogenic avian influenza in Kansas and other states.

The Molecular Services unit of the Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in K-State's College of Veterinary Medicine is part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture-Wildlife Services National Wildlife Disease Program, the largest national avian influenza surveillance effort for U.S. wild bird populations. Highly pathogenic avian influenza is a contagious and sometimes deadly virus that threatens domestic bird populations, especially poultry.



Kansas State celebrates success of Ford County community visit

Kansas State University continues traveling the state as part of the new presidential community visit initiative that focuses on the people of Kansas and their communities. The initiative consists of nine community visits throughout the state this academic year.

President Richard Linton and several Connected 'Cats students led a K-State team of faculty, staff and extension professionals who visited Ford County on Sept. 27. The next K-State community visit will be Wednesday, Nov. 2, in the Greater Kansas City area.

The Sept 27. Ford County community visit engaged hundreds of community members throughout the day in events that highlighted community partnerships and K-State Research and Extension relationships.

"Although highly pathogenic avian influenza has not been detected in Kansas since April 2022, fall bird migrations pose a reintroduction risk that could once again threaten domestic bird populations," said Lance Noll, clinical assistant professor at the Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

"Surveillance testing is an important tool for detecting and identifying the distribution of highly pathogenic avian influenza in wild bird populations, as well as for the potential spread of the virus into new areas of concern," Noll said. "Through participation in this surveillance program, the Kansas State Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory is contributing to ongoing efforts of early detection of highly pathogenic avian influenza for the state of Kansas."

The diagnostic lab's sampling efforts began in May and will continue through February 2023, focusing primarily on dabbling ducks from hunter harvest, agency harvest or live capture and release, Noll said. Samples testing positive for avian influenza and the H5 subtype are considered presumptive positives for the disease and are forwarded to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, for confirmatory testing and strain identification.

"Our Molecular Services lab has been testing wild bird surveillance samples from Kansas, as well as many from Texas and Oklahoma," Noll said. "This is a nationwide surveillance program and we are one of many National Animal Health Network labs across the country who are participating in the effort." In the last month, highly positive avian influenza H5N1-positive wild birds have been identified in several neighboring states, including Colorado, Oklahoma and Iowa, as well as in many other states. Confirmed cases in commercial and/or backyard poultry operations have also been recently reported in states across the region, including Colorado, Nebraska, Texas and Minnesota.

Linton and the K-State team participated in an open forum as well as conversations surrounding important topics for the Ford County community, including preparing and supporting the local workforce, the Rattlesnake Creek watershed and preparing for and responding to disasters. A Calling all 'Cats recruitment event occurred in the evening, too.

"It was energizing to spend the day interacting with people who represent a wide array of experiences and organizations in the Ford County and surrounding area," said Joshua Diazdeleon, senior in elementary education, Liberal, and a Connected 'Cats event leader for the Ford County community visit. "As Connected 'Cats, it was exciting to tell our K-State stories and also meet with prospective students and community leaders. K-State truly lives its land-grant mission to support all parts of the state."

"As a graduate of Dodge City High School who also attended Dodge City Community College, it was wonderful to return to my hometown and engage with the community," said Marissa Ramirez Veldez, senior in construction science and management, Dodge City, and a Connected 'Cats event leader for the Ford County community visit. "K-State has always been a great supporter of first-generation students like me, and I appreciated the opportunity to engage in discussions about the workforce and improving educational opportunities in Ford County."

The presidential community visit initiative will continue throughout the academic year.

DID YOU KNOW?

In the Princeton Review's just-released "Best 388 Colleges for 2023," K-State is No. 1 in the nation for best quality of life.



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